

their objectives clearly. Number one, they want to defeat the coalition in Iraq. The second step is that they want to destabilize the moderate Muslim regimes in the Middle East. The third step is they want to eliminate the State of Israel. The fourth step is they want to establish the caliphate, northern Africa, southern Europe and Middle East reaching down into Asia. And then they want to establish Sharia law in these areas.

In another part of this recent communication, they indicated that they believe the world is made up of two primary areas: a core, Western Europe and the United States and outlying region, outlying areas; and the Middle East, northern Africa, the parts that make up the caliphate. And what they clearly say is that in today's world, because we have been on the offense, the violence has been in the outlying areas, Afghanistan, Pakistan, northern Africa and Iraq. And what they say is they want to move this violence from the outlying regions to the core. What does that mean? They want to move the violence to Europe and to our homeland.

Today, as we face this critical test, today we received a letter from Mike McConnell who is the Director of National Intelligence, building on testimony that the intelligence community provided us in September in 2006, building on information that they gave to us in April, building on a public statement that Mr. McConnell made on May 21 in an op-ed piece in the Washington Post. What does it all say?

Our Nation faces an intelligence gap. Think of it. As we face greater risk and a higher security threat than we've faced perhaps in a long time, we have an intelligence gap, a situation in which our intelligence community every day is missing a significant portion of what we should be getting in order to protect the American people. Not only should we be getting it, but we could be getting it, but we have this intelligence gap because we have a 1970s law called the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act that Members on the other side of the aisle refuse, refuse to update and to modify.

The letter goes on, If we are to stay a step ahead of the terrorists and protect the American people, I firmly believe that we need to be able to use our capabilities to collect, now listen to this, to collect foreign intelligence about foreign targets overseas, without requirements imposed by an out-of-the-State, out-of-date FISA statute.

Today, for instance, the statute requires that in a number of important situations that we obtain court orders. We need to obtain court orders to most effectively obtain foreign terrorist communications, and remember, this is about foreign intelligence, about foreign terrorists, who are overseas, and we need to get court orders to intercept those communications.

The letter goes on, Simply put, in a significant number of cases we are in the unfortunate position of having to

obtain court orders to effectively collect foreign intelligence about foreign targets located overseas.

Then some say, well, let's just take some of our resources and apply it; we can expedite. Number one, it doesn't solve the problem to prepare these court orders by just putting more people, but to get the right kind of information, to prepare these court orders and get them done in the right way, it would take important analysts and put them in the position of preparing court orders for foreign terrorists and get court orders.

We need to fix this intelligence gap, and we need to do it before we go on recess next week.

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CUMMINGS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE FARM BILL

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, it's a pleasure to be able to address my colleagues, and thank you for your leadership as well.

Madam Speaker, I wanted to speak this evening on the legislation that is before this House that takes a completely new turn in farming and the agricultural agenda for this Nation, and there are certain elements that I would like to highlight.

When you think of an agricultural bill, you think immediately of farms and ranches, particularly of large size, almost a large conglomerate of a series of farms that provide the food engine for America. But this bill draws my attention and support because of the number of other elements and turns and new directions that this legislation takes.

It's important to note that this bill has a new definition, one of nutrition. This bill reauthorizes nutrition programs, accounting for two-thirds of the bill's funding to help low-income families in need, including the food stamp program that keeps many Americans from going hungry. The bill increases the minimum benefit under the food stamp program for the first time in 30 years.

Just this past week, Madam Speaker, we announced the increase in the minimum wage, the first time in 10 years. One of the greatest tragedies here in this most powerful Nation and powerfully economic Nation is the number of people in America that go to bed hungry. The greatest disaster of that is that a huge percentage happen to be children.

This bill eliminates the current gap on child care costs to help the working

poor meet rising costs. In addition, it nearly doubles the fund for emergency food assistance programs and expands the fresh fruit and vegetable snack program to all 50 States.

This bill focuses on an expanded view of nutrition and, in fact, increases the spending for nutrition by billions of dollars and expands the feeding of children by millions of dollars, but yet, it focuses on the family farmer and provides them with a resource base in order for those family farmers to survive.

I also applaud the fact that struggling, socially disadvantaged, and African American families who have farmed over the years and were abused under the United States Department of Agriculture and suffered, in fact, in a lineage of discrimination now will have a remedy, now will have recourse to a number of sections in this legislation that addresses the inequity of the treatment of black farmers, a number of extensions and protections that will make them whole after years of devastating, if you will, treatment by the United States Department of Agriculture.

I want to acknowledge the Agriculture Committee, the bipartisan work that they did, the chairman and the ranking member, Chairman PETERSON and Ranking Member GOODLATTE, on recognizing the work of the members of the Congressional Black Caucus that worked so very hard and the members of the committee that included DAVID SCOTT and included the task force, BENNY THOMPSON and G.K. BUTTERFIELD and a number of others that continued to work on this issue.

I had an amendment that I hoped to continue to address and that was to address the question environmentally of increasing the conservation fund for African American socially disadvantaged farmers. We still need to move in a direction of increasing the ability to, if you will, draw out of a dry arid land farming land or ranching land a survivable farm or ranch. I will continue to work on that issue. Even though that amendment was not made in order, I believe it's an issue that is crucial to continue the support and build a family farming system here in America that is still valuable and worth saving.

I do have an amendment that focuses on school lunches and school breakfasts, an issue in my district. Large corporations are now serving the Nation's schools for children who sometimes get no other meal other than school breakfast and school lunch. We're going to stand on the floor of the House and debate the question that it is the sense of this Congress to ensure that these lunches are nutritional, that they don't increase juvenile obesity, for we see a number of our children being overweight because of the food or lack of food that they have.

One other point as I close is simply to say the importance of alternative fuel is also counted in this legislation.

Overall, this legislation takes a new direction for America, an agricultural

agenda, and I look forward to debating my amendment tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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ENERGY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON) is recognized for 23 minutes, half the time until midnight, as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, it's a delight to come to the House tonight and talk about an issue that I believe is vital to America's economic future, vital to the strength of our families, of our communities: energy.

I want to congratulate the leadership of the House. Next week is going to be energy week. We are going to be having bills coming from the Resources Committee, the Ways and Means Committee. I think, tonight, tomorrow, we will be dealing with some energy issues in the farm bill, because I personally believe available, affordable energy is the number one challenge facing America.

Now, from what I have seen in the committee structure, and I am hoping when we get to the floor we will have amendments, and we will have more discussion, but there are some concerns. I know that the bills coming to the floor remove incentives to produce domestic energy. That's energy produced in America or offshore. I know there is increases in taxes on domestic energy production. That's extra taxes on those who will produce, process energy here in America. But I see no incentives to produce the basic fossil fuels, oil, gas, nuclear, coal, or some that I think are potentially helpful, coal to liquids and coal to gas.

I have a chart on my left here that shows us the current use of energy, 23 percent clean, green natural gas; 23

percent coal, mostly for power generation. Down here, we have 40 percent petroleum, and a large portion of that is our transportation system, but it's used in other ways too. Then we have nuclear energy in the kind of a light, grayish blue color over here.

Now, the ones we really have all the hope for are here in the 6 percent; that's our renewables. Now you will hear everybody promoting renewables, and we should. But let's look at what amount we today have from renewables, and how we can grow them. We are going to have lots of incentives, and we have had lots of incentives. The 2005 bill had incentives for all renewables.

Solar is .06 of a percent of our energy supply today; .06, that's not even 1/10 of 1 percent. Now the one that surprised a lot of people is biomass, 2.4 percent. A lot of that's woody waste, it's the pellet stove industry, it's waste being burned in boilers to heat factories, to dry wood. Lots of places where they have wood waste, they put in wood-burning boilers. It's also been used to top coal-burning boilers so they can meet air quality standards, because wood burns cleaner than coal.

Then we have geothermal. We know geothermal is using ground heat, ground temperature, water temperature; but it's .36 of a percent. Then we have hydroelectric that's 2.7. That's a figure that's declining because we have actually taken dams out in this country.

Then we have wind, which we hear a lot about today, but it's .12 of a percent of our energy portfolio.

I guess my concern is that we have a growing need of energy in America, somewhere, 2, 2.5 percent a year; and we all know that we must conserve. We must use energy more wisely. This chart shows you that.

But it appears to me that all the hope, and all the faith, and all the incentives are going to be out here. We should have them out there.

But if we don't produce more natural gas, if we don't produce more oil, and if we don't at least develop coal to liquids or coal to gas, then the growth in the renewables will not even meet the demand in the growth in energy use in the country, so it's very concerning.

Now, I believe the one that we really miss out on is natural gas. Natural gas heats 57 percent of our homes. It heats probably 70 percent of our businesses. It's used in huge amounts to make electricity. I think 20 percent of our natural gas is now used to make electricity, and natural gas is a major ingredient in making ethanol.

We currently have 116 ethanol plants, and we have 78 under construction, and seven that are under expansion. Up to 95 percent of these plants, we use clean, green, natural gas to run their boilers to make ethanol. So that is very vital to us that we have adequate amounts of clean, green natural gas.

It's interesting that hydrogen is one that's not a percentage, but it's one

that we talked about in hydrogen vehicles, but the hydrogen we make today is made from what? Natural gas.

Biodiesel, not on the chart, but another item that's starting to perk out there. We use, again, a lot of natural gas to make biodiesel.

Now, the problem we have had in America is we use a lot of natural gas, and here's the reason why: about 12 years ago we took away the prohibition of making electricity with natural gas. When this happened, we started to have a shortage. As the use of natural gas goes up, and we are not supplying more natural gas, we are getting huge price increases. Just 6 years ago, natural gas was less than \$2 a thousand. Last year the average price to homeowners was about \$12.50 a thousand, huge increases.

Now, this has been monumental to business. Dow Chemical, chemical companies use huge amounts of natural gas; 55 percent of the cost of making chemicals in America is natural gas. They use it as an ingredient; they use it as a fuel. Dow Chemical's gas bill in 2002 was \$8 billion, a lot of money. In 2006, it was \$22 billion, and today it's rising.

The problem we have is we have continued to make ethanol, all our chemical plants, fertilizer plants, fertilizer, 50 to 70 percent of the cost of making nitrogen fertilizer, natural gas. Natural gas is an ingredient. All the ladies who like skin softeners, a major ingredient in skin softeners is natural gas.

Natural gas is in our carpets. It's in our drapes. It's in many of our clothes. It's in plastic products; 45 to 50 percent of polymers in plastic cost is natural gas.

All the good industries we have left in this country use huge amounts of natural gas. For the last 6 years, we have had the highest prices in the world on natural gas because we have refused to open up new fields. We have refused to reach offshore. We have made it difficult in many parts of the West to produce natural gas.

We look at it as something evil to drill a 6-inch hole in the ground, put a steel pipe in and let gas out. Yet it's what fuels the country. America is great because we always had cheap affordable energy up until 6 years ago.

Another factor many Americans don't know, and too many Members of Congress don't know is that natural gas is not a world price, when, currently, oil is \$75, \$77 a barrel, pretty painful for our economy, but it's pretty painful for all our competitors around the world too. But for 6 years, America has had the highest natural gas prices in the world. That's something we need to do something about.

We can see a chart here of what it's done to manufacturing. We have lost more jobs in America because of natural gas prices. As natural gas prices have risen, manufacturing price jobs have dropped because the fertilizer industry in the last 2 years, 40 percent of manufacturing went offshore. They are hanging on with a string. If we don't